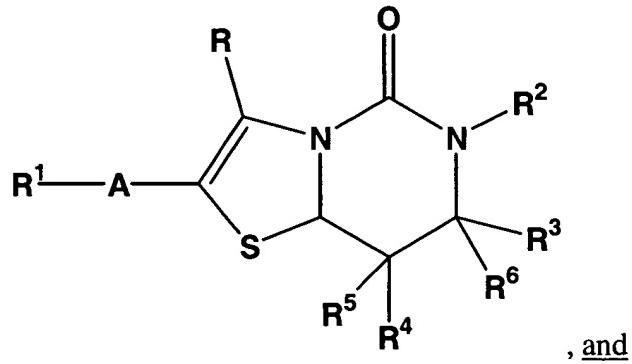
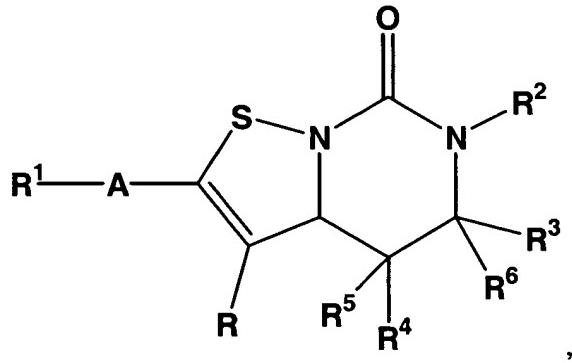


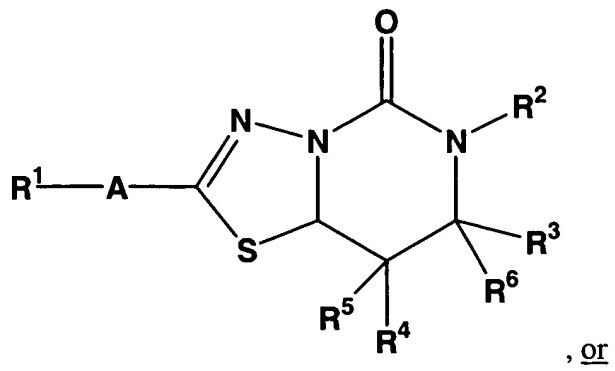
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

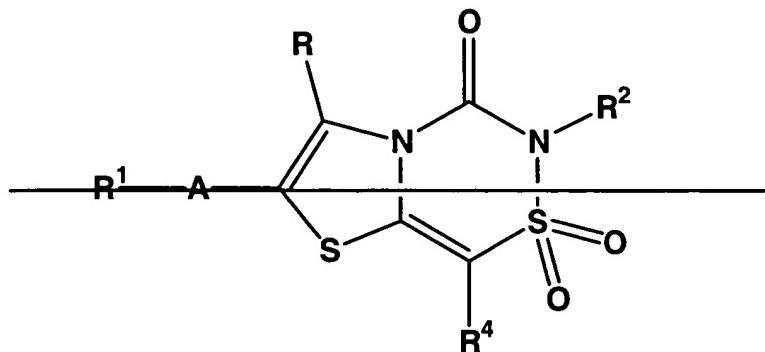
Listing of claims:**Claim 1 (cancelled).**

Claim 2 (currently amended). A compound according to claim 1 selected from the group consisting of:

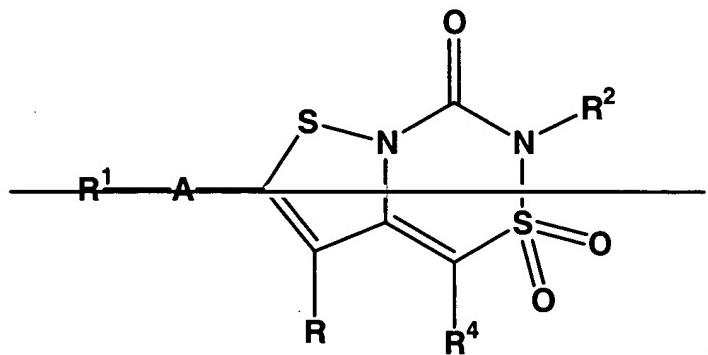




, or



; and



- 8 -

a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof,

wherein A is $-\text{NR}(\text{C=O})$, $-(\text{C=O})\text{NR}$, $(\text{C}_2\text{-}\text{C}_6)$ alkynyl-, or a bond;

wherein each R, R^1 , R^2 , R^3 , R^5 , and R^6 are the same or different, where ever they appear,

C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-; wherein each of the aforesaid group members, (C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, and (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, may be optionally independently substituted with one to three suitable substituents selected from the group consisting of hydrogen, halogen, hydroxy, -CN, (C₁-C₄)alkyl-, (C₁-C₄)alkoxy-, CF₃-, CF₃O-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₄)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₄)alkyl-, HO(C=O)-, (C₁-C₄)alkyl-(O)(C=O)-, (C₁-C₄)alkyl-(O)(C=O)(C₁-C₄)alkyl-, (C₁-C₄)alkyl-(C=O)-, (C₁-C₄)alkyl-(C=O)(C₁-C₄)alkyl-, -(S=O)R, -(SO₂)R, and NR⁷R⁸ wherein R⁷ and R⁸ are independently selected from hydrogen, (C₁-C₆)alkyl; R, R³, R⁵, and R⁶ may further be hydrogen; and R⁴ is selected from the group consisting of hydrogen and (C₁-C₆)alkyl-, and R⁴ may be optionally substituted with one to three suitable substituents selected from the group consisting of halogen, hydroxy, -CN, CF₃-, and CF₃O-.

Claim 3 (currently amended). The compound of Claim 1 Claim 2, wherein R¹ is independently selected from (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, and (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-.

Claim 4 (currently amended). The compound of Claim 1 Claim 2, wherein R² is independently selected from (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₃-

(C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, and (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-.

Claim 5 (currently amended). The compound according to any one of ~~Claims 1 to 4 as in Claims 2, 3, or 4~~, wherein R¹ and R² are each independently selected from (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkenyl-, (C₃-C₁₀)cycloalkyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, (C₁-C₁₀)heterocyclyl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-, and (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₂-C₆)alkynyl-.

Claim 6 (original). The compound according to Claim 5, wherein R¹ and R² are each independently selected from (C₆-C₁₀)aryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl- and (C₁-C₁₀)heteroaryl-(C₁-C₆)alkyl-.

Claim 7 (original). The compound of Claim 6, wherein R³, R⁴, R⁵, and R⁶ are each independently selected from the group consisting of hydrogen and (C₁-C₆)alkyl-.

Claims 8 to 10 (cancelled).

Claim 11 (currently amended). A method for treating arthritis, comprising administering to a patient suffering from an arthritis disease a nontoxic antiarthritic effective amount of a compound of ~~Claim 1~~ Claim 2, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

Claim 12 (original). The method according to Claim 11, wherein the arthritis is osteoarthritis or rheumatoid arthritis.

Claim 13 (cancelled).

Claim 14 (new). A pharmaceutical composition for the treatment of arthritis in a mammal, including a human, comprising an amount of a compound of Claim 2, or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, effective in such treatment and a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.